

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TORRANCE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Parks and Recreation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:10 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8, 2006, in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Cook, Perkins, Robbins, Smoot, Taniguchi, Tookey, and Chairperson McGee.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Recreation Services Administrator Jones, Park Services Administrator Wilson, Administrator Analyst Orpe, and Nature Center Manager/Naturalist Drake.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Manager/Naturalist Drake led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Robbins moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Taniguchi seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES OF JANUARY 11, 2006

MOTION: Commissioner Cook moved for the approval of the January 11, 2006 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Perkins and passed by unanimous voice vote approval (with Commissioner Tookey abstaining).

6. OLD BUSINESS

6A. None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7A. MADRONA MARSH ANNUAL REPORT

Recreation Services Administrator Jones introduced the item and welcomed Nature Center Manager/Naturalist Tracy Drake.

With the aid of a power point presentation, Manager/Naturalist Drake presented "Madrona Marsh Preserve: The Year 2005 in Review." She reported that in 2005 there were 19,103 total visitors as well as 2,984 volunteers. She provided information about the ten Eagle Scout projects undertaken at the Preserve, with 522 additional volunteers in attendance. She discussed the abundance of water, the restoration of the sump, and the presence of avocets and Painted Lady butterflies at the beginning of the year. She stated that by May 2005 there were several programs offered at the Nature Center and showed slides of baby mallards, a red-tailed hawk, dragonflies, and snakes. She stated that the water remained in June and July, and discussed summer programming that included the Junior Naturalist Program and a Redondo Beach Art Group program. She described harvester ants, turtles and tortoises, and birds that frequent the Preserve in the fall, a Jess Morton art display in November, and an Arbor Day celebration in December. She expressed her appreciation to Friends of Madrona Marsh for their generous donations of over \$13,000.

In response to Recreation Services Administrator Jones' inquiry, Manager/Naturalist Drake stated that staff was moving forward with several of the guidelines outlined in the Madrona Marsh Management Plan. She stated that staff continued to develop programs for youth, outreach to the community, and work with other agencies to restore the Preserve.

Commissioner Taniguchi noted that there was a current segment on the Madrona Marsh Preserve on "This Week in Torrance."

At Commissioner Robbins' request, Manager/Naturalist Drake provided an update on the quality of soil in the nursery, noting that the abundance of water in the southwest corner was not due to leakage but was water sitting on top of a clay layer.

Responding to Chairperson McGee's inquiry, she explained that at present reclaimed water could not be used in the Preserve, but that sump water was an alternative water source.

In response to Commissioner Tookey's inquiry, she explained that the bald eagle that visited the Preserve was born and raised on Catalina Island and that other birds were on migration paths.

Recreation Services Administrator Jones noted that Manager/Naturalist Drake was in need of additional part-time and perhaps full-time staff, and that she was talking to Friends of Madrona Marsh about possibly making an annual contribution to support more staff members.

Manager/Naturalist Drake stated that staff hoped to increase outreach to Torrance Unified School District, and mentioned a class taught jointly with Cal State Dominguez Hills and El Camino College on Tuesday nights.

7B. BUDGET UPDATE

Recreation Services Administrator Jones introduced the item and welcomed Administrative Analyst Andrew Orpe.

Administrative Analyst Orpe stated that his presentation coincides with the City's general mid-year budget review. He explained the City's system of plan expenditure per quarter, noting that on February 10, 2006 the department would meet with management to explain any positive or negative variances.

He reported that as a whole the Community Services Department is meeting its expenditure and revenue goals, with Parks Services Division at 53.3% and Recreation Services Division at 53.1%. He stated that areas of concern for the Parks Division include increased energy and utility costs and that areas of concern for the Recreation Division lie in being under spent rather than overspent. He stated that expected Parks and Recreation revenues are ahead of schedule at 70.5% due to fee increases.

When Commissioner Tookey suggested that the extra revenue funds be used to provide youth scholarships, Administrative Analyst Orpe advised that there was \$35,000 available that was being underutilized. He suggested that the Commission review the methodology for qualifying and awarding scholarships later in the year.

Recreation Services Administrator Jones clarified that the Recreation Division is in an enterprise fund, and any money that exceeds projected revenue will stay in the enterprise fund. He stated that these funds could be used to create new programs or for additional part time staff. He discussed the importance of balancing the needs of the community as a whole and to meet those needs without putting all resources in one area.

Responding to Commissioner Robbins' inquiry, he stated that there would be a campaign to market the scholarship program through the next Torrance Seasons.

8. STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES

8A. OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

No report.

8B. FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Commissioner Taniguchi reported that the Facilities Committee met with the Pueblo Park community to discuss the conceptual plan for the park development.

Commissioner Perkins stated that the meeting was educational.

Recreation Services Administrator Jones advised that the conceptual plan was now final and that he has contacted the landscape architect for a cost estimate.

When Chairperson McGee mentioned that two residents attended the meeting who were interested in the Lago Seco Park community gardens, Recreation Services Administrator Jones explained that new guidelines were being formulated for the community gardens and that there would be an increase of fees and security deposits, not only at Lago Seco Park but also at Columbia Park where improvements will be made. He estimated that Lago Seco Park would be complete by the end of April 2006.

8C. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

No report.

9. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY

9A. PARK SERVICES DIVISION

In response to Commissioner Taniguchi's inquiry, Park Services Administrator Wilson stated that the car accident at Wilson Park was probably due to speeding in spite of the 15 mph speed limit and speed bumps. He discussed increased enforcement of the 10:00 p.m. curfew at the park.

He provided an update on the universally-accessible tree house, noting that additional workers have been brought in, with celebration of completion expected in mid-March 2006.

9B. RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION

Recreation Services Administrator Jones reported that the youth basketball program has over 2,000 participants and 228 teams.

A brief discussion centered on the challenge that the mostly volunteer coaches and referees have with some parents' conduct.

He stated that the senior citizen program, 50th Reunion at Wrinkle Creek High, held at the Recreation Center was very successful.

10. ORALS

10A. Torrance Youth Council members Vickie Hsieh and Doo Park shared information about the ASB Bowl at the ATTIC on April 4, 2006.

Recreation Services Administrator Jones thanked the Youth Council for their generous donation to the ATTIC for renovations.

10B. Manager/Naturalist Drake encouraged Commissioners to visit the Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center.

10C. Recreation Services Administrator Jones informed the Commission that City Council approved funding for the Live Steamers clock at Wilson Park as well as \$45,000 to the Rose Float Association on February 7, 2006.

10D. Commissioner Robbins expressed concern that there was a recall petition being circulated at Farmers Market.

10E. Commissioner Taniguchi wished Commissioners a happy Valentines Day.

10F. Commissioner Smoot welcomed Administrative Analyst Orpe and thanked Manager/Naturalist Drake for her informative presentation.

10G. Chairperson McGee stated that he was looking forward to working on the Pueblo Park development.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:17 p.m., Commissioner Tookey moved to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to March 8, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Taniguchi and, hearing no objection, Chairperson McGee so ordered.

Approved as Submitted March 8, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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